

### **DETAILED ACTION**

This is a final Office action in response to applicant's arguments filed on 06/16/2009, the response to a non-final Office action on 3/31/2009, the claims submitted on 02/08/2005.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103***

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Art Unit: 1791

4. Claims 1, 2 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over US Patent 4,675,064 (Berger).

US Patent 4,675,064 teaches a filter cigarette comprised of a tobacco rod (12; Figure 1) and filter made of filtration material (14, Figures 1, 2, 3, 4; col. 3 lines 40-43) joined thereto forming a joint abutment (col. 3 lines 32-34), said filtration material of said filter being wrapped along the length thereof in a porous wrapper being other than a plugwrap (18, Figures 1, 2, 3, 4; col. 5 lines 6-9; Figure 4), which is in direct contact with said filtration material (14 and 18, Figure 4; col. 3 lines 53-56), and a strip of material covering said joint abutment and only areas closely adjacent to said joint abutment of the tobacco rod and the filter, thus connecting the filter and the tobacco rod (16, Figure 1; column 3 lines 29-39).

With regard to the tipping paper or other wrapper having an inherent permeability of 50-500 CU, it should be noted that the cigarette of the US Patent 4,675,064 teaches a tipping paper as that claimed. No distinction between the tipping paper claimed and that of US Patent 4,675,064 is seen. Therefore, the tipping paper of US Patent 4,675,064 would inherently have the inherent permeability of 50-500 CU.

Alternatively, lacking a clear distinction between the claimed tipping paper and that of US Patent 4,675,064, it would be expected that the tipping paper of US Patent 4,675,064 would possess the inherent permeability range as claimed. Should it be shown that US Patent 4,675,064 is really outside said range, it is well known in the art that said range is a common permeability range for cigarette tipping paper. For further reference, please see the reference listed under

**Conclusion.**

With regard to claim 2, US Patent 4,675,064 teaches that the strip material (16) may be comprised of tipping paper (column 3 lines 25-40; Figure 1).

With regard to claim 10, US Patent 4,675,064 teaches that the tipping paper wrapped about the filter is provided with ventilation holes (column 4 lines 55-63).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

5. Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 4,040,430 (Molins). US Patent 4,040,430 teaches a method of reducing filter-tip cigarette manufacturing cost comprising providing batches of filters wrapped along their length in a tipping paper or other wrapper being other than plugwrap (column 2 lines 18-35; column 5 lines 20-25), with each batch of wrapper filters having a predetermined ventilation level and being sourced from the same filter making machine (22, 26) (Figure 1; column 2 lines 54-68); supplying the batches of filters to respective filter tip assembly machines capable of producing a double cigarette assembly of a double filter between two wrapped tobacco rods (column 2 lines 25-35; column 6 lines 5-10), each filter tip assembly machine utilizing two narrow strips of material to inter-attach the double filter and two wrapped tobacco rods (column 1 lines 55-70; column 3 lines 15-40), cutting the double filter to provide two filter tip cigarettes (column 6 lines 20-40), and thereby producing batches of filter tip cigarettes (58) with varying ventilation levels from a plurality of filter tip assembly machines (Figure 1).

Art Unit: 1791

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4,675,064 in view of US Patent 5,819,751 (Barnes). US Patent 4,675,064 has been discussed above. US Patent 4,675,064 however does not expressly disclose that the strip material is made of foil material.

US Patent 5,819,751 teaches in a method of manufacturing cigarettes the use of a wrapper for circumscribing/ connecting the jacketed fuel element (18) and substrate section (20) of a cigarette in which the wrapper (32) is made of foil material and is used for limiting the amount of oxygen which will reach the burning portion of the fuel element (10) during use of the cigarette, preventing the wicking of aerosol-forming materials from the substrate (22) to the fuel element (10), the insulating jacket (12) and/or from staining of the other cigarette components.

Art Unit: 1791

The foil wrapper also would minimize / prevent peripheral air (i.e., radial air) from flowing to the portion of the fuel element (10) disposed longitudinally behind its front edge, thereby causing oxygen deprivation and preventing excessive combustion (Figure 1; col. 3 lines 20-30; col. 5, lines 33-49). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the foil material of US Patent 5,819,751 to make the strip material of US Patent 4,675,064. The rationale to do so would be derived from the teachings of US Patent 5,819,751 for using the foil material in order to minimize/prevent peripheral air from flowing to the portion of the fuel element, thereby causing oxygen deprivation and preventing excessive combustion.

Claims 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4,675,064 in view of US Patent 4,040,430.

US Patent 4,675,064 has been discussed above. However, regarding the limitations of Claims 4-6, US Patent 4,675,064 does not expressly disclose that the strip material may be printed or imprinted, and comprise a width between 4-12 mm or 6-10 mm.

US Patent 4,040,430 teaches that it is well known for cigarette manufacturers to print a brand identification on the tobacco section wrapper. The strip material may be printed for the purpose of distinguishing the brand identification of the cigarettes (column 6 lines 5-10) and said strip material may have a width of 7 mm for the purpose of suitably uniting the tobacco section with the filter elements of the cigarettes (column 5 lines 15-25).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the printed / imprinted strip material with the disclosed width of US

Art Unit: 1791

Patent 4,040,430 to make the cigarette of US Patent 4,675,064. The rationale to do so would have been to print the brand identification of the cigarette on the wrapper near the tobacco section (US Patent 4,040,430: column 6 lines 5-10) and for economic reasons: a conventional cigarette of length 85 mm could have its filter element and tobacco rod joined with only 7 mm of uniting strip material using 7 mm of glue, instead of the conventional 23 mm of glue).

Claims 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4,675,064 in view of US Patent 4,998,541 (Perfetti).

US Patent 4,675,064 has been discussed above. However, US Patent 4,675,064 does not expressly disclose that the strip of material extends over a maximum of 20% of the filter length, or less than 15% of the filter length.

US Patent 4,998,541 teaches that the tipping material (45) connecting the filter element (30) and tobacco rod (15) of the cigarette circumscribes the entire length of the filter element (and an adjacent region of the tobacco rod) (column 3 lines 5-10; Figure 1). US Patent 4,998,541 also teaches that the filter element typically has a length of 20-35 mm (column 3 lines 35-40) and that the tipping material connecting the filter element and tobacco rod of the cigarette extends about 3-6 mm (column 4 lines 40-45). Thus, the tipping material extends over less than 15% of the length of the filter.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to combine the strip material of US Patent 4,675,064 with the configuration of the strip material on the cigarette of US Patent 4,998,541. The rationale to do so would have been to enhance control over the performance characteristics of the cigarette, as the strip material may comprise perforations

Art Unit: 1791

whose total surface area and its specific positioning along the periphery of the cigarette affect its performance (US Patent 4,998,541: column 4 lines 50-56).

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4,675,064 in view of US Patent 4,998,541 and in further view of US Patent 4,040,430.

US Patent 4,675,064 and US Patent 4,998,541 have been discussed above. US Patent 4,675,064 in view of US Patent 4,998,541 however fail to disclose that the degree of coverage of the strip of material joining the filter and tobacco rod is equal.

US Patent 4,998,541 teaches a strip material that circumscribes the filter element and an adjacent region of the tobacco rod extends about 3-6 mm along the length of the tobacco rod (column 4 lines 40-45).

US Patent 4,040,430 teaches that a strip material manufactured to combine the tobacco rod and filter element of a cigarette in a similar manner has a width of 7 mm (column 5 lines 20-25).

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to combine the strip material of US Patent 4,675,064 with the configuration of the strip material on the cigarette of US Patent 4,998,541. The rationale to do so would have been to enhance control over the performance characteristics of the cigarette, as the strip material may comprise perforations whose total surface area and specific positioning along the periphery of the cigarette affect its performance (US Patent 4,998,541 : column 4 lines 50-56).

Since US Patent 4,998,541 and US Patent 4,040,430 combine to teach the same material – the measurements of the strip material– and its configuration in the cigarette is in the same

Art Unit: 1791

manner as instantly claimed, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have expected that the strip material (about 7 mm as disclosed in US Patent 4,040,430) would indeed impart an approximately equal degree of coverage to the tobacco rod and filter element (if the strip material covered about 3.5 mm of the length of the tobacco rod (which would be within the range disclosed in US Patent 4,998,541 ), then the strip material would cover about 3.5 mm of the length of the filter element).

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4,675,064 in view of US Patent 5,595,196 (Salonen).

US Patent 4,675,064 has been discussed above. US Patent 4,675,064 however, does not expressly disclose that said tipping paper enwrapping said filter element have a basis weight of 25-45 g/m<sup>2</sup>.

US Patent 5,595,196 teaches a process for manufacturing filter cigarettes with tipping paper of basis weight 28-40 g/m<sup>2</sup> (column 3 lines 54-60). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the weight basis of the tipping paper of US Patent 5,595,196 with the wrapper of the filter element of US Patent 4,675,064. The rationale to do so would have been that the base tipping paper of US Patent 5,595,196 has improved lip release properties, meaning that the smoker may more easily release the tipping paper from their lips while using the cigarette (US Patent 5,595,196: column 1 lines 10-30).



Art Unit: 1791

Claims 13-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4,675,064 in view of US Patent 6,935,346 (Bushby).

US Patent 4,675,064 has been discussed above. However, US Patent 4,675,064 does not expressly disclose that the wrapper surrounding the tobacco rod of said cigarette may comprise a particulate ceramic filler of predefined shape and a binder, with optional ash improver and/or burn additive, wherein said ceramic filler is alumina (or another similar thermally stable metal oxide / metal salt), is present in the range of 50-95% by weight of the wrapper, and has a particle size of 2-90 um (with a mean particle size of 50 um).

US Patent 6,935,346 teaches a smoking article comprising a wrapper material enwrapping a tobacco smoking material, the wrapper containing a proportion of ceramic filler of predefined shape, a binder, and optionally a burn additive and / or ash improver (column 2 lines 28-36); with said filler present in the range of 50-95% by weight of said wrapper (column 2 line 66 - column 3 line 3). US Patent 6,935,346 teaches that said filler also has a particle size in the range of 2-90 um, with a mean particle size of 50 um (column 2 lines 46-55), and is comprised of thermally stable metal oxide or metal salt (column 2 lines 56-65).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the filler elements in the tobacco rod wrapper of US Patent 6,935,346 to make the cigarette of US Patent 4,675,064. The rationale to do so would have been to reduce sidestream smoke levels by using a wrapper comprising a ceramic material being capable of mechanically trapping mainly aqueous particulate phase materials (US Patent 6,935,346: Abstract). US Patent 6,935,346 describes the predefined shape of the ceramic filler (substantially spherical / oval), the disclosed particle size of said filler, the use of an insoluble

Art Unit: 1791

metal oxide in said filler, and the amount of said filler present by weight in said wrapper (50-95%) as technically highly advantageous for said objective (US Patent 6,935,346: column 2 lines 40-55; column 3 lines 1-5). The burn additive would give optimal burn characteristics and the most acceptable ash color upon smoking (US Patent 6,935,346: column 3 lines 39-45).

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4,040,430 in view of US Patent 4,675,064 and in further view of US Patent 6,718,989 (Clarke).

US Patent 4,040,430 teaches an assembly method of producing filter cigarettes comprising a filter wrapped in tipping paper or other wrapper being other than a plugwrap (column 5 lines 15-24) and a tobacco rod wrapped in a wrapper (column 6 lines 5-11).

US Patent 4,040,430 does not expressly disclose that batches of filter tow are wrapped in tipping paper (or other wrapper being other than plugwrap), said paper having been treated with particulate matter at a station prior to unification of the filter elements and wrapped tobacco rods.

US Patent 4,675,064 teaches the continuous filter tow being treated before being wrapped (column 5 lines 20-40) while US Patent 6,718,989 teaches the use of particulate matter in the filter wrapper (column 8 lines 30-40; Figure 16).

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the process of treating the filter tow of US Patent 4,675,064 and the incorporation of the particulate matter into the filter wrapper of US Patent 6,718,989 with the assembly method of US Patent 4,040,430. The rationale to do so would have been to make the assembly process faster and more cost efficient, as both the filter wrapper and filter tow may be comprised of cellulose acetate, meaning that any lost material may be recycled into the assembly

Art Unit: 1791

to form new filter wrapper (US Patent 4,675,064: column 6 lines 15-20); additionally, the inclusion of particulate matter (activated carbon) of US Patent 6,718,989 in the filter wrapper would adsorb vapor phase components in the smoke from the manufactured cigarette, possibly reducing sidestream smoke (US Patent 6,718,989: column 8 lines 33-41).

Claims 20-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4,040,430 in view of US Patent 4,998,541.

US Patent 4,040,430 does not expressly disclose that the wrapper of the filter element may be comprised of tipping paper provided with ventilation holes (either during or after manufacture) made mechanically or by laser means.

US Patent 4,998,541 teaches a cigarette with the filter element wrapped in tipping paper, wherein said paper is provided with ventilation holes that may be made mechanically or by lasers (column 4 lines 45-55). It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the tipping paper of US Patent 4,998,541 with the cigarettes made by the assembly of US Patent 4,040,430. The rationale to do so would have been that the perforations in the tipping paper would provide a means for providing air dilution of drawn mainstream smoke with ambient air while smoking, a desirable feature of modern cigarettes (US Patent 4,998,541: column 1 lines 15-20; column 4 lines 47-53). The perforations themselves (and their positioning, total surface area, etc.) also may be used to control the performance characteristics of the cigarette (US Patent 4,998,541: column 4 lines 50-55). The use of lasers or mechanical means to make said perforations is well known to those skilled in the art, as evidenced by Rofin (Lasers for Industry: Perforating Perforations) and Knight (EP 578385

Art Unit: 1791

A1) (column 1 lines 1-10). Thus the incorporation of a perforated tipping paper (with the perforations made mechanically or by laser means) to enwrap the filter elements of cigarettes would allow the assembly method of US Patent 4,040,430 to make a more desirable cigarette.

Claims 25, 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4,675,064 in view of US Patent 4,784,163 (Adams) and in further view of *The Design of Cigarettes* (1981) (Browne).

US Patent 4,675,064 has been discussed above. However, US Patent 4,675,064 does not expressly disclose that said other wrapper enwrapping said filter element is comprised of a barrier material with a pore size of less than about 5  $\mu\text{m}$  or less than about 1  $\mu\text{m}$ .

US Patent 4,784,163 teaches a porous wrapper for a smoking rod having a pore size in the range of about 1  $\mu\text{m}$  (column 3 lines 37-47). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the wrapper for the smoking rod of US Patent 4,784,163 with the other wrapper of the filter element of US Patent 4,675,064. The rationale to do so would have been to prevent ink particles (from the printing on the cigarette surface) from permeating through the wrapper (US Patent 4,784,163: column 3 lines 30-36).

Also, it is generally known in the art that the porosity of the wrapper for the filter element of a cigarette directly affects the ventilation level of the cigarette, which in turn controls the amount of smoke delivery during consumption of said cigarette (Browne: pages 47-49). Thus it would be obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to decrease and / or minimize the pore size of the wrapper in order to achieve a specified level of ventilation for the cigarette.

Claims 27-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4,675,064 in view of US Patent 6,718,989.

US Patent 4,675,064 has been discussed above. However, US Patent 4,675,064 does not expressly disclose that the wrapper of the filter element may be comprised of a perforated barrier material (50-5000 CU/cm length) comprised of a vaporous, porous polymeric material, and with particulate material (activated charcoal, activated carbon, or molecular sieves) applied at a predetermined location on said barrier material.

US Patent 6,718,989 teaches a filter cigarette enwrapped in highly porous (2,000 CU) paper that may be comprised of a polyethylene layer (column 5 lines 19-35) as well as particles of activated carbon that have been uniformly distributed at predetermined locations on said paper (column 8 lines 32-40; Figure 16).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the paper surrounding the filter element of US Patent 6,718,989 with the cigarette of US Patent 4,675,064. The rationale to do so would have been that the high porosity of the barrier material of US Patent 6,718,989 would provide for dilution (by ventilation air) of non-filtered smoke directly delivered to the smoker, improving control over the ratio of non-filtered to filtered smoke being delivered to the smoker and resulting in a milder, more aromatic, enjoyable smoke (US Patent 6,718,989: column 1 lines 15-55; column 2 lines 15-20; column 4 lines 30-40). The polyethylene layer of the wrapper may also contribute to the biodegradability of the overall cigarette (US Patent 6,718,989: column 6 lines 15-20), and the

Art Unit: 1791

particulate material of activated charcoal helps adsorb vapor phase components in the smoke from the cigarette (US Patent 6,718,989: column 8 lines 35-40).

Claim 31 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4,675,064 in view of US Patent 5,595,196.

US Patent 4,675,064 has been discussed above. US Patent 4,675,064 however does not expressly disclose that said strip of tipping paper have a basis weight of 20-50 g/m<sup>2</sup>.

US Patent 5,595,196 teaches a process for manufacturing filter cigarettes with tipping paper of basis weight 28-40 g/m<sup>2</sup> (column 3 lines 54-60). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the weight basis of the tipping paper of US Patent 5,595,196 with the strip of US Patent 4,675,064. The rationale to do so would have been that the base tipping paper of US Patent 5,595,196 has improved lip release properties, meaning that the smoker may more easily release the tipping paper from their lips while using the cigarette (US Patent 5,595,196: column 1 lines 10-30).

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments, see pg. 7, 18-31, Figures 1, 3, and 5, filed on 06/16/2009, with respect to Claim 1, have been fully considered and are persuasive. The rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 112 second paragraph has been withdrawn

Art Unit: 1791

Applicant's arguments, see pg. 7, Figures 1, 3, and 5, filed on 06/16/2009, with respect to the numbering of the Claims 18-31, have been fully considered and are persuasive. The objection to the numbering of the Claims 18-31 has been withdrawn.

Applicant's arguments, see pg. 7, filed on 06/16/2009, with respect to Figures 1, 3, and 5, have been fully considered and are persuasive. The objection to Figures 1, 3, 5 has been withdrawn.

Applicant's arguments filed on 06/16/2009, with respect to the rejection of Claims 1, 2 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)/103(a), have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The applicant claims a filter wrapped along the length thereof in tipping paper or other porous wrapper being other than a plug wrap, with said tipping paper or other porous wrapper in direct contact with the filtration material. US Patent 4,675,064 (Berger) teaches these limitations. US Patent 4,675,064 teaches a filter wrapped along the length thereof in a **porous** overwrap, described below:

"The overwrap film (18; Figures 1 and 4) can be perforated at the same time that the tipping paper 20 is perforated by any techniques well known in the prior art for this purpose." (col. 5 lines 6-9; Figure 4)

Said porous wrapper of US Patent 4,675,064 is also in direct contact with the filtration material (14, Figure 4; col. 3 lines 53-56). Thus, US Patent 4,675,064 teaches every aspect of

Art Unit: 1791

the claimed invention either explicitly or impliedly and therefore anticipates the embodiments of Claims 1-17 of the current application.

In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992).

In this case, because the principal reference US Patent 4,675,064 teaches every aspect of the claimed invention either explicitly or impliedly and therefore anticipates the embodiments of Claims 1-17 of the current application, the combinations of US Patent 4,675,064 (Berger) with US Patent 5,819,751 (Barnes), US Patent 4,040,430 (Molins), US Patent 4,998,541 (Perfetti), US Patent 5,595,196 (Salonen), US Patent 6,935,346 (Bushby), US Patent 4,784,163 (Adams), *The Design of Cigarettes* (1981) (Browne), and US Patent 6,718,989 (Clarke) are properly motivated and obvious to those with ordinarily skill in the art at the time of the invention.

### ***Conclusion***

US Patent 5,394,895 discloses the permeability index of various samples of cigarette tipping paper as being in the range of 300-600 CU (Experiment 1; Table 1).



Art Unit: 1791

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to VICKI WU whose telephone number is (571)270-7666. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:30 am-6:30 pm), every other Fri. off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph Del Sole can be reached on 571-272-1130. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/V.W./

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